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SOVIET WHALING FLEET RETURNS FROM ANTARCTIC
CASPIAN SEA TANKERS CRITICIZED

WHALERS EXCEED PRODUCTION PLAN -- Morskoy Flot, No 41, 24 May 49

On 23 May, the Slava Whaling Flotilla entered the Black Sea from its third Antarctic voyage which lasted 7 months. The ships started out from Odessa last October and started whaling operations on 15 December in the vicinity of the South Polar Circle, 180 miles from the Antarctic Continent. The flotilla encountered on its course many large icebergs and drifting ice fields.

This year, the expedition worked under difficult meteorological conditions, particularly in March. At one time, the storm reached an intensity of 9 - 10 points. During the stormy days the Siava was located beyond the South Polar Circle and crossed the 69th parallel. Orders were sent out from the Siava to the other ships to proceed to the Antarctic coast and wait out the storm on the edges of the ice. The wind reached hurricane intensity and the air temperature dipped to minus 10 degrees.

Despite difficult conditions, the flotilla considerably exceeded its production plan. If all the whales caught by the flotilla were laid in one line, they would extend 22 kilometers. Among the captains of the whaling ships are Dmitriy Tituzov, Georgiy Fondarev, Lavrentiy Kharchenko, Arkadiy Morozov, and Yevgeniy Belestov. Konstantin Demishev is chief of communications.

The Diesel ship Kreml (captain, V. Shabluya) transported fuel, provisions, and whaling equipment to the flotilla. Freight operations were carried out in the open sea.

The Slava left the whaling territory on 26 March for the shores of South Africa, where it made a short stopover in Capetown. The flotilla's course took it past the Southern Sandwich Islands. At noon on 2 April, the ships

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entered the straits between Streteniya and Vysokiy islands. The ships also passed Zavadovskiy and Leskov islands. The flotilla anchored off one of these islands where the sailors collected specimens, including eight penguins, for scientific institutions of the USSR.

Sailors of the Slava have already begun preparations for the fourth Antarctic voyage.

CASPIAN TANKERS MUST IMPROVE OPERATIONS -- Morskoy Flot, No 41, 24 May 49

Petroleum constitutes almost one half the total volume of freight transported by ships of the maritime fleet. Caspian petroleum steamship lines are now entering the best season for petroleum transport. Baku oil is hauled to the Astrakhan' roadstead; from where it is transported by the ships of "Reydtanker" (Roadstead Tanker Fleet) to Astrakhan', the beginning of the long Volga route.

"Kasptanker" (Caspian Tanker Fleet) successfully completed the first-quarter and April plans, and in 20 days of May completed 64.7 percent of the May plan in tons and 67.3 percent of the plan in ton-miles. The fleet transported 45,500 more tons of petroleum products than in the same period of 1948. The tankers Stalin, Zhdanov, Beriya, V. Chkalov, Tayurupa and Krest'yanin have the highest production record of the fleet and are now making a drive to shorten stopovers in ports and in the Astrakhan' roadstead.

"Reydtanker" has also been working efficiently both in transporting freight and in handling ships in the roadstead. Unloading such large tankers as the Stalin, Komintern, Tayurupa and Profintern in the roadstead has been completed in 5 hours.

In May, the operation of the petroleum fleet on the Caspian has substantially lessened due mainly to inefficiency in the roadstead. In the first half of May, unproductive idle time of Caspian tankers in waiting for barges amounted to more than 350 hours, and idle time of "Reydtanker" ships topped 700 hours. Much of this time could be reduced if the roadstead administration would keep "Kasptanker" informed of the estimated idle time so that tankers could be sent to Makhach-Kala or Krasnovodak. Dispatchers of both "Kasptanker" and "Reydtanker" must work in closer cooperation and with greater efficiency to speed handling of ships. A great responsibility rests with "Reydtanker" since its slightest inefficiency is reflected throughout all petroleum transport facilities.

BLACK SEA TANKERS EXCEED PLAN -- Morskoy Flot, No 41, 24 May 49

The Black Sea "Sovtanker" Fleet exceeded the 4-month transport plan, and the rate of transport is increasing daily. The highest production levels were achieved by the tankers Moskva (captain, Pomerants), Ararat (captain, Tkachenko), Peredovik (captain, Balakhrhev), and Utrish (captain, Nazarenko), all of which continually exceed the plan.

MARITIME FLEET NEEDS HIGH-SPEED METHODS -- Morskoy Flot, No 40, 20 May 49

The 1949 State plan has raised the norms for freight handling for the maritime fleet. The volume of freight handling in tons has been raised 15.1 percent over 1948, and the volume in ton-miles has been raised 14.9 percent. The gross norm for freight handling operations has been raised 23 percent over the 1948 figure.

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High-speed handling of ships and cargoes was unsatisfactory in many ports during 1948. In 1947 it rose 17 percent over the 1946 figure, but in 1948 the rise was only 4.3 percent. Operations were unsatisfactory in Vindava (Ventspil's), Klaypeda, Nikolayev, Baku, and Reni; ports of the Main Administration of the Far East Fleet, with the exception of Vladivostok, handled only 4 percent of their freight by high-speed methods.

EXPRESS STEAMER TO PETROPAVLOVSK ANNOUNCED -- Krasnoye Znamya, No 89, 16 Apr 49

The first-class ocean passenger steamship Sibir' of the Far East State Steamship Line will start express service to Petropavlovsk on 23 April. The ship has first- and second-class accommodations. Tickets for military personnel are sold at the maritime station and for others at the city station (Vladivostok) of the Primorskiy Railroad System.

LENINGRAD SCHOONERS FOR KAMCHATKA -- Molodcy Dal'nevostochnik, No 79, 30 Apr 49

At the end of 1948, a fleet of auxiliary-powered sailing schooners set out from Leningrad for a round-the-world voyage to Kamchatka where the schooners will be turned over to fishermen. The fleet is now in the vicinity of Pearl Harbor. Khodov, captain of the schooner Blek, has reported that the fleet at present is averaging 200 miles a day using sails. The entire voyage is estimated to cover 15,000 miles. In a May-Day competition, sailors have pledged to reach Kamchatka 17 days ahead of schedule. The fleet made the trip by way of the Gulf of Finland, the Baltic and North Seas, the Atlantic Ocean and now, the Pacific Ocean.

Tikhookeanskaya Zvezda, No 105, 6 May 49

The auxiliary-powered sailing schooners Globus and Zvezda from Leningrad have arrived in Petropavlovsk-on-Kamchatka. Two remaining ships, the Omar and Blek, are proceeding from the port of Santo Massa [sic] to Sakhalin. The schooners have covered 16,000 miles in 5 months, and have arrived at their destination one month ahead of schedule. Both schooners will be turned over to "Glavkamchatrybprom" (Main Administration of the Kamchatka Fish Industry).

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